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REVIEWS

Studies in the Marketing of Farm Products. By L. D. H. WELD and students in agricultural economics. (Bulletin of the University of Minnesota, No. 4 of the "Studies in the Social Sciences.") Minneapolis, February, 1915. Royal 8vo, pp. iv+113.

The studies which are comprised in this valuable bulletin are devoted to the very important task of collecting facts in several fields of farm marketing and of analyzing the situation in those fields so that the defects of the present system may be detected. Of the eight papers represented, Dr. Weld contributes the first, "Market Distribution," the seventh, "Co-operative Marketing of Grain in Canada," and the eighth, "The Food Supply of the Iron Range." The other papers deal with "The Marketing of Live-Stock Products in Minnesota" (by K. F. Warner), "Co-operative Potato Marketing in Minnesota" (by O. B. Jesness), "The Marketing of Minnesota Poultry" (by S. H. Thompson), "Milk Distribution in Minneapolis and St. Paul" (by W. L. Covert), and "Minneapolis Central City Market" (by R. M. Peterson), and consist of studies made under the direction of Dr. Weld by his students.

The central point of interest in these studies is the determination of what portion of the price which the consumer pays for agricultural products the farmer secures. Dr. Weld rightly calls attention to the fact that many of the published statements pertaining to this issue are either mere assumptions or of doubtful validity, and that, as a consequence, patient studies and careful analyses of the system of marketing must be made before an absolutely just opinion can be formed. He believes that, when the results are all in, it will be found that the farmer receives a larger share of the consumer's price than is usually stated. His own analysis of the facts pertaining to the marketing of Minnesota agricultural products allots to the farmer a simple average of 53.09 per cent and a weighted average of 63.5 per cent of the retail price (p. 7). The average price per pound paid by consumers living in New York City for Minnesota butter is 36 cents. Of this price Minnesota farmers receive 25 cents. Minnesota chickens marketed in Minneapolis at an

average price of 20 cents per pound bring the farmer an average price of 9.1 cents a pound.

These studies confirm the conclusion, which previous studies had reached, that the larger portion of the share of the spread which goes to the various groups of middlemen standing between the farmer and the ultimate consumer in the marketing system is absorbed by the retail dealers. And while all features of the marketing system require careful study, the retail distributive system stands in special need of it.

It is believed that studies have gone far enough now to indicate some of the remedies of the present marketing system, and these remedies are stated as co-operative marketing on the part of farmers, voluntary association among dealers, government regulation, and the education of the public by special courses on marketing in agricultural colleges and schools of commerce and by information given to farmers and business men.

These papers show that co-operative marketing is gaining a stronghold in Minnesota and Western Canada. Minnesota has over 1,000 marketing organizations and did a business in 1913 of over \$50,000,000 in handling farm products. The Grain Growers' Grain Company of Winnipeg handled about 30,000,000 bushels of grain during the year 1914 besides doing a large distributive business for farmers. Professor Weld believes that the co-operative movement has assumed such proportions in Minnesota, at least, that it is in need of direction rather than encouragement.

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The Modern City and Its Problems. By FREDERIC C. HOWE. New York: Scribner, 1915. Pp. 390. \$1.50.

The merit of this book is not originality of material but clearness of arrangement and profundity. Dr. Howe has wide and profound knowledge of the modern city in Europe and America, as all of his books show. Here he has arranged clearly a good part of this knowledge, some of which has appeared before. With so many things for which to criticize the American city we welcome the hopefulness (e.g., pp. 55, 64) of this book and we are shown the intellectual basis for this hope. The thesis may be quoted from the book: "It is not the voter, not the people, who are primarily at fault, but institutions, traditions, and public opinion which have failed to keep pace with the problems we have been